A1

from all the members, and determines whether or not the business of each member has been completed. In such a case, the number of mails to be read increases as the number of members increases, and so the leader's job increases.

Page 2, line 8

A2

Further, in order that a member other than the leader determines the progress states of other members, he or she should send mails to the other members to confirm their progress states in a fashion similar to that mentioned above, and should receive their responses. Therefore, the process of transmitting and receiving mails between members becomes complicated.

Page 2, line 15

A3

The displaying of received mails as a list has been conventionally performed, but in the conventional method, only a list is displayed.

Page 2, line 18

A4

There are many cases in which, when a mail is transmitted, a sender wishes to know whether or not the receiver confirms the contents of the mail. In a conventional electronic mail system, however, the sender can determine whether or not the receiver opened the mail but cannot determine whether or not the receiver actually confirms the contents of the mail. In a personal computer communications system or the like, when a receiver reads out a mail which has been stored in a host computer, a sender is informed that this mail has been opened. According to this method, even if the terminal provided on a receiving side automatically reads out a mail from a host computer, this mail is handled as opened. Therefore, a sender cannot determine whether or not a receiver actually confirms the contents of a mail.

Page 4, line 15

A5

For example, completion information which indicates that a receiver of the message confirms the contents of the message or that the business related to the message is completed, is included in the receiver state list. Thus, the sender of a message or receivers thereof can determine whether or not all the members who received the messages have confirmed the messages or whether or not the businesses related to the messages have been completed, by looking at the receiver state list. Accordingly, the states of all the receivers can be obtained

simultaneously.

Page 5, line 14

A message management method of the present invention is used to display the formatted message related to a business process and the non-formatted message other than this business together with the message type as a receiver state list.

Page 9, line 21

According to this message processing system, a plurality of terminals 11 are connected to a server 13 through a line network 12 such as a LAN or the like. A message processing program 14 of the server 13 has the functions of preparing and transmitting a message for the terminals 11, as well as a function of displaying the list of to the received m messages, the list of messages to be transmitted, received messages, and the like. A message file 15 is a file in which the information on a message sender side is stored. The title of the message, a sender ID, the contents of the message, or the like are stored in the message file 15. A message management table 16 is a table in which the information on a message receiver side is stored. A receiver ID, completion time and date, and comments to a message or the like are stored in the message management table 16. A member table 17 is a table for storing information about members who are destinations of messages. In this table, a member ID, names, a group which the members belong to or the like are stored.

Page 10, line 13

The message file 15 includes a region 15a for storing a message ID to be assigned to each message, a region 15b for storing a sender ID, a region 15c for storing a transmission time and date, a region 15d for storing the due date of a response to the message, a region 15e for storing a message type such as a job request, a display operation or the like, a region 15f for storing information about whether or not the message is confidential, a region 15g for storing a title, and a region 15h for storing the contents of the message. Further, the message file 15 includes a region 15i for storing a time and date when a message is updated, a region 15j for storing the ID of an examiner who examines whether or not the message is approved, a region 15k for storing examined results, a region 15L for storing the ID of an approver who approves the message after this message is examined, a region 15m for storing the approved results; a region 15n for storing the information about whether or not the examined and approved message is readable, and a region 15p for storing a comment pattern which is specified by the

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sender. The message file 15 further includes regions for storing attribute information such as the requirement for comments, important comment, urgent comment or the like, other than the above mentioned regions.

Page 11, line 14

The message type is the information indicating which one of a job request, an investigation, a process of making all of a specific matter fully recognizable, a requirement for opinions or requests from the members, or the like, is the content of a message. According to the present embodiment, if a message type is selected by a sender when a message is prepared, an attribute such as the requirement for the comment to be included in a response, the requirement for a NO/YES answer or the like, is automatically set according to the thus-selected message type. where the investigation with a time limit, for example, is selected as a message type, attributes of a "requirement for comments", and "with a time limit" are automatically set for the message. Accordingly, the sender does not need to set every attribute for each of all the messages.

Page 12, line 7

Next, the message management table 16 includes a region 16a for storing a message ID, a region 16b for storing a receiver ID, a region 16c for storing a time and date when the message is opened, a region 16d for storing the completion time and date when the receiver opened the message and operated a definition button which will be described later, and a region 16e for storing comments to the message. The data stored in the message management table 16 are corresponded to the data stored in the message file 15 by the message ID.

Page 14, line 6

When a box indicating "with examination and approval" is clicked, and the names of an examiner and an approver are set, a check box provided in the section of "with examination and approval" is displayed in black, and a process corresponding to the designation of the examiner and the approver is performed (S14).

Page 14, line 19

Therefore, when a sender selects a job request as a message type as shown in Fig. 4, a "requirement for comments" and "with a time limit" are automatically set as attributes. Since the check boxes provided in "a requirement for comments" and "with a time limit" section are

A12

displayed in black as shown in Fig. 4, the sender does not need to set every attribute.

Page 17, line 21

A13

When it is determined in step S29 that the message type is not the "process of making all of a specific matter fully recognized" (NO in step S29), the flow advances to step S31, and it is determined whether or not the message type is a "memorandum". If the message type is the "memorandum", the flow advances to step S32, and "confidential" is set as an attribute. If the "memorandum" is set as a message type when preparing a message, this message designates the sender, and the attribute becomes confidential. Therefore, the sender can store this message so it is only seen by the sender.

Page 26, line 9

A14

The receiver's name, the open time and data, the completion time and data, and comments which are obtained by the above-mentioned processes are transferred to the display and edit region (S72). It is determined whether or not processes terminate for all the receivers stored in the message management table 16, corresponding to the message ID (S73). where processes do not terminate for all the receivers, the process returns in step S69, and the above-mentioned processes are repeated. where processes terminate for all the receivers, on the other hand, the contents of the display and edit region are displayed as the receiver state list 24 (S74).

Page 27, line 19

A15

where the transfer button 26 is operated, the process advances to step S48, and a transfer process is performed for transferring the received message to another person as it is. Further, where the existing-message-transmission button 27 is operated, the process advances to step S49, and an existing-message-transmission process is performed for preparing a new message using the text of the received message.

Page 28, line 7

A16

When the title of a specific message is clicked while the received message list 20 is being displayed, the message type, the title, the contents of the message, and the like are displayed. If this is the first opening, the current time and date are stored in the region 16c for storing the time and date when the message management table 16 is opened. After the contents of the message are confirmed, the receiver performs an YES/NO check, inputs comments, or

the like according to the message type. After that, when the definition button 23 is operated, the comments which are inputted to a comment section are written in the storage region 16e for storing the comment of the message management table 16, and the time and date when the definition button 23 is operated are written in the storage region 16d for storing a completion time and date, as a completion time and date. where the "requirement for comments" or the "requirement for an YES/NO check" is set as an attribute of the message at this time, a process is not handled as completed even if the definition button 23 is operated without inputting comments or performing the YES/NO check. Consequently, the completion time and data are not written in the message management table 16.

Page 32, line 5

where the message is returned in a not-opened state, the open time and date, and the completion time and date of the corresponding message ID of the message management table 16 are cleared (S138). Next, the current time and date are obtained (S139) to be written in a region 15i for storing the update time and date of the message file 15 (S140). Further, the amended data are written in the corresponding storage region of the message file 15 (S141). where the message is returned in a not-opened state, since the comments which the receiver wrote are not modified, response operations terminate after operating the definition button 23 if the receiver displays the amended message, confirms the contents, and does not require to change the comments.

Page 33, line 12

Thus, where data of the transmitted message are changed, the message can be returned in the not-opened state. Accordingly, when a message is amended, it is not necessary to prepare a new message again to be transmitted, so that the operations for preparing a message can be reduced. where the amended message requires comments, and the comments to the amended message do not need to be changed, the receiver neither prepares a new response message nor inputs comments to the received message, since the comments which were previously prepared are stored without modification. Therefore, the operations for a message response are reduced.